CLAIMS

The invention claimed is:

1. A reconfigurable furniture system comprising:

a first side frame having first and second opposing portions and third and fourth opposing portions, the first opposing portion being coupled to a first end of the third portion and a first end of the fourth portion, the second opposing portion being coupled to a second end of the third portion and a second end of the fourth portion;

a second side frame opposing the first side frame, the second side frame portion having first and second opposing portions and third and fourth opposing portions, the first opposing portion of the second side frame being coupled to a first end of the third portion of second side frame and a first end of the fourth portion of second side frame, the second opposing portion of second side frame being coupled to a second end of the third portion of second side frame and a second end of the fourth portion of second side frame;

a first support member being coupled to the first portion of the first side frame proximate the fourth portion of the first side frame and to the first portion of the second side frame proximate the fourth portion of the second side frame;

a second support member being coupled to the second portion of the first side frame proximate the fourth portion of the first side frame and to the second portion of the second side frame proximate the fourth portion of the second side frame;

a first cross-member coupling the first and second side frames;

a second cross-member coupling the first and second side frames; and

an operating surface member being positioned on and supported by the first and second cross-members when the furniture system is in a first configuration, the operating surface member being positioned proximate and supported by the first and second support members when the furniture system is in the second configuration.

2. The system of claim 1 wherein the first configuration is a seat configuration and the operating surface member comprises first and second operating surface portions, the first operating surface portion being positioned to function as a seat bottom and the second operating surface portion being configured to function as a seat back.

3. The system of claim 2 wherein the second portions of the first and second side frames are positioned to rest on a floor surface.

4. The system of claim 2 wherein the first portions of the first and second side frames are positioned at opposite sides of the operating surface and project outwardly from the first support member to serve as first and second arm rests, respectively.

5. The system of claim 2, further comprising a retaining member on the first operating surface portion to receive and releasably retain the second operating surface portion.

6. The system of claim 5 wherein the retaining member on the first operating surface portion comprises a channel having sufficient depth to receive and releasably retain the second operating surface portion.

7. The system of claim 2, further comprising a hinge to couple the first and second operating surface portions.

8. The system of claim 1 wherein the second configuration is a table configuration and the operating surface member is positioned to function as a table top.

9. The system of claim 8 wherein the third portions of the first and second side frames are positioned to rest on a floor surface.

10. The system of claim 1 wherein the first and second side frames, the first and second support members and the first and second cross-members are made from metal.

11. The system of claim 1 wherein the first and second support members and the first and second cross-members are coupled to the first and second side frames by welding.

12. The system of claim 1 wherein the first and second support members and the first and second cross-members are removably coupled to the first and second side frames.

13. The system of claim 12 wherein the first and second support members and the first and second cross-members are coupled to the first and second side frames by bolts.

14. A reconfigurable furniture system comprising:

first and second opposing side frames each having first and second sets of side frame members, the first set of side frame members providing vertical support when the furniture system is placed in a first configuration and the second set of side frame members providing vertical support when the furniture system is placed in a second configuration;

first and second support members coupled to the first and second side frames, the first and second support members defining a plane that is vertically oriented when the furniture system is placed in the first configuration and horizontally oriented when the furniture system is placed in a second configuration;

first and second cross-members coupled to the first and second side frames at a location spaced apart from the first and second support members; and

an operating surface member resting on and supported by the first and second cross-members when the furniture system is placed in the first configuration, the operating surface member resting on and supported by the first and second support members when the furniture system is placed in the second configuration.

15. The system of claim 14 wherein the first configuration is a seat configuration and the operating surface member is resting on and supported by the first and second cross-members to function as a seat bottom.

16. The system of claim 15, further comprising an additional operating surface member being positioned proximate to and supported by the first operating surface member and the first support member to function as a seat back when the furniture system is in the first configuration.

17. The system of claim 16, further comprising a retaining member on the first operating surface member to receive and releasably retain the second operating surface member.

18. The system of claim 17 wherein the retaining member on the first operating surface member comprises a channel having sufficient width and depth to receive and releasably retain the second operating surface member.

19. The system of claim 16, further comprising a hinge to couple the operating surface member and the additional operating surface member.

20. The system of claim 14 wherein the first set of side frame members are positioned to provide vertical support as legs when the furniture system is placed in the first configuration.

21. The system of claim 14 wherein the second configuration is a table configuration and the operating surface member is resting on and supported by the first and second support members to function as a table top when the furniture system is placed in the second configuration.

22. The system of claim 21 wherein the second set of side frame members are positioned to provide vertical support as legs when the furniture system is placed in the second configuration.

23. The system of claim 14 wherein the first and second side frames, the first and second support members and the first and second cross-members are made from metal.

24. The system of claim 14 wherein the first and second support members and the first and second cross-members are coupled to the first and second side frames by welding.

25. The system of claim 14 wherein the first and second support members and the first and second cross-members are removably coupled to the first and second side frames.

26. The system of claim 25 wherein the first and second support members and the first and second cross-members are coupled to the first and second side frames by bolts.

27. A method of reconfiguring furniture for multiple uses comprising:

positioning a frame having side supports and cross supports on a first side;

positioning an operating surface on an upper portion of the frame in a horizontal orientation to permit the operating surface to function as a table top;

temporarily removing the operating surface;

rotating the frame ninety degrees such that a portion of the frame that was previously in a substantially horizontal orientation on the floor is now positioned in a substantially vertical orientation to serve as a leg of the frame; and

repositioning the operating surface on an intermediate portion of the frame to function as a seat bottom.

28. The method of claim 27, further comprising positioning an additional operating surface proximate and supported by the first operating surface and the frame to function as a seat back when the operating surface is positioned to function as the seat bottom.

29. The method of claim 27 wherein the frame is made from metal.

30. The method of claim 29 wherein the frame comprises frame components and the method further comprising welding the components together to form the frame.

31. The method of claim 27 wherein the frame comprises frame components and the method further comprising removably coupling the components together to form the frame.

32. The method of claim 31 wherein removably coupling the frame components comprises bolting the components to form the frame.

33. The method of claim 27 wherein the operating surface and an additional operating surface are rotatably coupled together, the method further rotating the operating surface with respect to the additional operating surface to form a seat bottom and a seat back when the frame is rotated to operate in a chair configuration.

34. The method of claim 33, further comprising rotating with respect to the additional operating surface such that the operating surface and the additional operating surface are substantially parallel to each other when the frame is rotated to operate in a table configuration.